

Conclusions of the Chair

Speaking points

It has been an honour for me to chair the second High-Level Policy Forum on Migration. I would like to thank the OECD and its Secretary-General, Angel Gurría, for this opportunity and for organizing this important and successful event. I would particularly like to thank my co-chair, Andrea Nahles, for her leadership and support.

I would also like to thank all of the delegates for making this year's event a success. In my view, this Forum has allowed for a healthy open dialogue about the challenges and successes of our respective migration systems and helped us create new ideas on how to move forward.

The quality and depth of our discussions have shed some needed light on how we, as OECD members and key partner countries, can learn from each other to enhance not only our domestic migration management policies, but also to contribute to a more effective global migration regime that benefits all countries, both origin and receiving, and all migrants.

So thank you, everyone, for your participation and your valued contributions. It was a particular pleasure to have with us high-level representatives from key partner countries of the OECD, including Brazil, China and South

Africa, as well as representatives from international organizations and business and trade communities.

As world leaders consider how to address constantly evolving regional crises, including those in the Middle East and Africa, this Forum could not have been timelier.

As clearly demonstrated throughout the Forum, global migration patterns are often unpredictable and have significant impact, first and foremost on the affected populations, but also on destination countries.

While some countries will be affected more than others by these events, we are all reminded of the need to keep our migration policies flexible and nimble to respond to these unexpected situations, as well as to others, such as environmental or natural ones.

We learned from our first session yesterday that we may have different approaches to achieving our common goals, but we also acknowledged our similarities:

- We all aim to find the right balance between our multiple objectives: our short and long-term needs; and economic and non-economic migration.
- We all strive for coherence and complementarity between our migration and integration policies, and

we recognize the important nexus with our economic policies.

While we all do our best to manage inflows in a sustainable way, we also recognize that some of us continue to be challenged with finding the right balance between temporary and permanent immigration to best address labour market needs.

Finding the right balance is also essential for maintaining public support for our migration policies.

As highlighted by the EU Commissioner, in the near future, our countries will face even greater demographic challenges with respect to labour market participation.

Many countries anticipate a greater need for labour migration in the future to respond to these challenges. Yet, current public opinion in many of our countries does not widely support this.

Over the past two days, we heard, notably from Greece and Turkey, about the importance of providing the public and the media with transparent, evidence-based information about the true costs and benefits of migration. This also implies countering negative stereotypes, as stressed by the UN Secretary-General in his message to the participants of this High-Level Policy Forum.

We agreed on the importance of well managed migration, which can fulfill our labour market needs without displacing our domestic workers, as stressed by New Zealand and Switzerland. We acknowledged that labour immigration should be designed so as to avoid the risk of negative effects on wages, as noted also by Norway.

As highlighted by Australia, France, Germany and others, to ensure people's confidence in our immigration systems and their support for immigration, maintaining the integrity of our policies and processes is critical.

Throughout this two-day Forum, we heard about how we can improve outcomes and build public confidence through cooperation among different stakeholders.

In order to ensure both migrants and destination countries benefit economically and socially from migration, we recognize that many stakeholders have a role to play.

OECD member countries, as well as key partner countries such as Brazil, acknowledged that better integration outcomes are inextricably linked to better migration and integration policies. And social partners, including employers and unions, can help us to develop such policies.

In recent years, many OECD countries have strengthened their relationships with employers and unions to identify skills deficits and migrants who can quickly transfer their skills into the host country's labour market. Along with this, we all recognized the importance of demand-driven labour migration.

These partnerships have also been advantageous in strengthening compliance with the migration system and reducing discrimination and abuse, particularly within the context of labour laws, as pointed out by Mexico.

Earlier today, we recognized that as we select migrants who are most likely to integrate and succeed in our economy, we continue to develop policies that improve the outcomes of all migrants – not only labour migrants, but also humanitarian and family migrants, who account for the bulk of migration in most countries.

For example, many countries noted that language and recognition of foreign credentials are crucial. And that's why integration services that help migrants to get appropriate employment and to succeed in our economy and society are so important.

But are these enough to help achieve optimal outcomes? Or are there other paths we should be exploring?

As I already suggested, there's now more pressure for us to show greater efficiencies with our programs and policies, and to demonstrate our decisions are evidence-based.

Over time, we will face even greater pressure to establish more direct links between our policies and integration measures, and migrant outcomes, a challenge not only shared by OECD countries but also by Brazil.

In other words, we may want to demonstrate whether our policies are actually *improving* the labour market outcomes and social integration of migrants.

To do this, our policies and programs will need to become more focused on migrant outcomes, and they will need to be measurable. Common principles regarding the economic and social integration of migrants and their children are particularly welcome in this context. Furthermore, as reinforced by Mr. Pascal Lamy, we need to strengthen international cooperation while doing a better job domestically, by engaging all relevant ministries and other stakeholders.

Finally, we may all wish to think of integration as a long-term process, not just something that occurs shortly after a migrant's arrival in the host country.

Integration is best viewed as an investment in our countries' future.

Over the past two days, we learned that our different experiences have contributed to a diversity of perspectives and policy approaches, which is why such exchanges are so important.

As we head back to our capitals, we will continue to look to the OECD as a catalyst for identifying answers to the challenges of migration management. As demonstrated yesterday, with the launching of the International Migration Outlook, the OECD continues to provide its member countries with high quality, comprehensive and reliable information on migration.

Attached to my Conclusions is an Annex that indicates the directions for OECD work going forward. This includes the examination of the impact of population aging, the development of a continuous mapping system of global migration movements, and the improvement of policy coherence in the multi-dimensional field of migration policy.

We all look forward to pursuing the sharing of policy experience and mutual learning, supported by the work of this important organization.

Thank You.

Some suggestions for future work of the OECD on migration

For 40 years the OECD has monitored international migration trends and policies notably through the OECD Expert Group on Migration (SOPEMI) and its flagship publication “*International Migration Outlook*”. The Ministers participating in the Forum commend the OECD for the high quality of this work. Its policy analyses have been highly relevant, as have been its comparable, comprehensive and reliable statistics on migration including international migration movements and the development of indicators of how well immigrants are integrating into their new societies. Regional analyses that go beyond the OECD area, covering notably labour migration in Asia, Latin America and the MENA region, are increasingly valuable. Going forward, Ministers invited the Organisation, under the auspices of the OECD Committee for Employment, Labour and Social Affairs and the Working Party on Migration, to pursue its activities in these key domains as well as to explore new areas. Ministers reaffirmed the key role of the OECD in building public confidence on migration issues by informing the public debate on migration in an objective and accurate manner.

As the global migration landscape is evolving rapidly, both in terms of scope and composition, OECD countries have to face new emerging challenges. The world economy is marked by major shifts in global wealth that are associated with globalisation as well as demographic, technological and geopolitical changes. Absolute poverty has halved globally in just a few decades and sizeable middle classes are emerging in different parts of the world. The regional distribution of the world population is shifting, as OECD countries and China age rapidly, while many other parts of the world, especially in Africa, see increasing youth cohorts entering the labour market. The extension of free mobility areas and geopolitical shocks both pose new challenges to the management of international migration. These evolutions already have consequences on the composition and size of international movements, and can be expected to affect future flows even more.

There are several questions which should be answered to better adapt policies in OECD countries. Subject to sufficient resources being available, we look to the OECD to help us identify answers to the following questions over the coming 5 years:

- How will population ageing affect the demand for foreign workers – including in health and care sectors?
- How can countries make a better use of migration policies to better integrate into the global value chain?
- How will the international competition for talents and business-related migration develop?
- Will regional geopolitical instabilities affect legal migration routes?
- How will rising inequality in developed countries and ongoing shifts in global wealth affect international migration, both permanent and temporary?

Ministers requested the OECD to help them improve the information and tools available to us when we make migration policy in the following ways:

- Develop a continuous **mapping system of world migration movements** by key characteristics, occupations and categories.
- Elaborate a **migration policy platform** to identify good practices and facilitate benchmarking in the field of migration policies for various categories of permanent and temporary migrants.

- Elaborate indicators of the **attractiveness of individual countries for highly skilled migrants, migrant investors and international students.**
- Propose a framework for how to manage migration in cooperation with origin countries ensuring that all parties get **a fair deal on labour migration.**

In many OECD countries, there are still serious concerns about whether immigrants and their children will fully integrate in the labour market and in the society and how immigration, labour market integration and education policies should be adapted and coordinated to make the most of migration and reduce the risk of a backlash against migration and migrants. Understanding that there is not one size fits all type of approach, and that policies should be adapted to the geographical, historical and demo-economic context of each country, Ministers invited the OECD to:

- Develop **country-specific analyses regarding the interlinkages between integration and migration policies**, with a special attention to institutional arrangements and intergenerational aspects.
- Make proposals to **improve policy coherence** in origin and destination countries between migration, integration and economic objectives as well as analyse the potential impact of cooperation for development policies on legal and irregular migration flows.
- Propose **common principles regarding the economic and social integration of immigrants and their children.**